

NPS Common Learning Portal (CLP) SUCCESS STORY

Providing Access to Training at the Moment of Need



Jennifer Kavanaugh
Partnership and Volunteer Coordinator for
the Delaware Water Gap National
Recreation Area

Jennifer Kavanaugh serves as the Partnership and Volunteer Coordinator for the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area (DEWA). In this position, she oversees thousands of volunteers – whether they are working directly with an NPS park ranger or one of the many partner organizations that the park operates in cooperation with – as they help to educate the public and conserve and protect a unit that includes 40 miles of the Middle Delaware River and approximately 70,000 acres along the river's banks between Milford, PA, and Delaware Water Gap, PA. The park provides outdoor recreation opportunities while conserving the natural, cultural, and scenic resources of the recreation area.

Challenge

As a manager at DEWA, Jennifer was required to take the Telework Fundamentals – Manager Training to fully understand the rules and policies around telework in the federal government as well as how to most effectively manage remote workers. Trouble was, she couldn't find the training easily. A search across the CLP produced no results.

Solution

Jennifer reached out to the CLP Team, asking if they could direct her to the Telework Fundamentals training. After a conversation with the CLP Team and her supervisor, Jennifer was able to locate the training, which is provided by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM).

The CLP was designed to make the lives of NPS employees easier. By providing a one-stop-shop for all professional development resources, the CLP reduces the amount of time employees might spend searching across multiple systems (e.g., DOI Talent, InsideNPS) or emailing a colleague as they look for training and learning information. Rather than working against each other, the CLP works with these other systems to make courses and trainings easier to find. In addition, it also provides a holistic learning environment, where the workforce can discover expert-vetted instructional videos, worksheets, and job aids as well as collaborate with other NPS employees, volunteers, and partners in the CLP Commons.

Recognizing that it can be difficult to find the types of trainings and information that you need when you need it, Jennifer suggested that the CLP Team consider posting the OPM Telework Fundamentals training to the CLP. She didn't want others running into the same issue she encountered of having to both search and ask her supervisor. The CLP Team promptly responded to Jennifer's request, and an overview and link to the training now lives within the CLP's Training Events Catalog.

Outcome

The CLP will always be a constantly evolving system. The NPS workforce comprises thousands of individuals, all of whom have a wealth of experience and knowledge in their areas of practice. No single individual is going to be aware of all the great resources that are out there that will help our colleagues develop themselves professionally and care for the resources we're dedicated to protecting. The growth and maturity of the CLP is dependent on individuals, like Jennifer, taking the initiative to share their knowledge and recognize resources that others will benefit from.

Since originally making contact with the CLP Team, Jennifer has decided to take on a more formal role with the CLP and is now a part of the CLP Content Governance Team. Her decision to do so is guided by a desire for information to be clear and easy to find and follow, and to be a part of enabling the CLP to be a user-friendly site for the workforce to use in pursuit of its learning and development goals. In this role, she'll provide a unique perspective as a CLP user and field-based manager.

“Finding things seems to be such a challenge. Every time I've had a question or comment, the CLP staff has been on top of everything, looking to make things more user-friendly. If I can be a part of that, helping people take advantage of the [Commons] groups and find information easily, I want to be.”

